

Program 9

Pat Frehan

Description of the Program

How do you begin to tell a story? Once upon a time and in the beginning are ways stories have been told for centuries. They have one thing in common, they all begin with an idea found to be so interesting that a plot and characters are created. Pat Frehan, a professor of Library Science, is a storyteller who takes these ideas and brings them to life. In this program she tells a silly story from a book that is out of print entitled **Tales of Laughter**.

Imagine for a minute that you are in a different place, a different time, surrounded by people that you don't know. What would you do? What your actions would be creates the beginning of a story. It's not hard imagining what if and when you do, you might find yourself in some interesting places and meeting some extraordinary people. You are using your imagination to create a story.

The Storyteller's Story

"Goose Hans"...Once upon a time there was a woman who had a son named Hans. Because he often acted as silly as a goose, he was called Goose Hans. Now this woman wanted her son to get out into the world and to make friends, so she made friends with a woman who had a daughter about the same age as Hans. Gretal and Hans became friends. One day Hans visited Gretal and they had a wonderful time playing together. When it was time to go, Gretal gave Hans a silver needle as a gift from her mother to Hans's mother. Hans wanted to protect the needle so he put it in a wagon of hay that was passing by. When Hans got home he told his mother about the needle but he could not find it in the wagon of hay. His mother called him a goose and told him next time to put it in the sleeve of his shirt.

The next time he played with Gretal she gave him a dagger to give to his mother from her mother. Hans remembered his mother's advice and put the dagger through his shirt sleeve. When he got home his shirt was ruined and his mother again called him a goose and told him next time to stick it deep into his pocket.

When he played with Gretal the third time, she gave him a gift. The gift was a baby goat and Hans followed his mother's advice and put it deep into his pocket. Fortunately, the baby goat was still alive when he showed it to his mother who nursed the goat back to health. She told Hans the next time to tie a rope around the neck and to drag it home.

This time Gretal gave Hans a pound of golden butter. He did as his mother said and tied a string around it and dragged it home. Mother told him that this wasn't right either. She told him to put it on his head and then put his hat on it to keep it cool.

Gretal's next gift was a cow which Hans put on his head and walked home. Mother told him next time to tie a rope around his neck and to take him to the barn. Well when Hans was going to Gretal's the next time, she met him on the road and

said that she was going to his house as a surprise. So Hans took a rope and tied it around her neck and led her to the barn. Mother found about the latest gift and released Gretel who ran home. Hans was not allowed to go back out of the house again because he was a silly goose.

Questions and Answers

1. *What is the best way to start a story?*

There are many ways but I like "once upon a time" because it set the tone for the story. Everyone knows that a story is going to follow.

2. *What are the different kinds of storytellers?*

I'm a library storyteller because that is my background. There are music storytellers, life storytellers, storytellers who use puppets, flannel boards or other objects to tell a story.

3. *Is storytelling dying in the United States?*

Not at all. I teach storytelling and I just had 13 students in my class. We are experiencing a rebirth of storytelling and in the next century, storytelling is going to be very important.

4. *What is your favorite kind of stories?*

I bet you can guess that it is silly stories. I like stories that have a little twist to them and I like poem type stories such those of Silverstein. Things that make me laugh and I hope will make the listener laugh too.

5. *What is your favorite thing about storytelling?*

I like to convey an idea and to see that the audience gets the story.

Suggested Activities

1. At the end of the program Ms. Frehan began to tell the story of "One Eye" from **Grandfather Tales** by Richard Chase. This is the same story that Hannah Baker told in program #7, but Ms. Frehan's version had some differences in just the first few sentences. What were they? (The old woman put her money in a leather sack and hung it in the fireplace instead under the floor boards, and she was carding wood in the evening instead of quilting) Let the children tell the tale Ms. Frehan told but make changes in the details without changing the major part of the story. Why would there be differences in a story that was found in a book?

2. Read story poems such as those by Shiel Silverstein. The story of **Casey at Bat**, **The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere** and many others can be found in your school's library. Let the students write their own story poems.

3. Let students write and/or tell "what if" stories. Students can write a "what if" question. These can be put in a container and drawn by students who then completes the "what if" question and makes a story out of it.